

## **Characteristics of Ph.D. Dissertations of Saudi Students Who Graduated from American Universities Between 1969-1985**

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to describe some characteristics of doctoral dissertations in education by Saudi students who graduated from American universities between the years 1969-1985 in terms of the number of dissertations written, type of academic degree awarded, universities that granted the degree, dissertation length in pages, authors' gender, topic of the dissertation, the courses examined, subjects' educational level (university, high school, middle school, primary school and so on), the title, the research problem, the research methodology used, the sample, statistical analysis methods, and the results. The results of the analysis revealed the number of women holding a doctoral degree in the time period under study was five. Most of the dissertations were completed at Michigan State University, the University of Northern Colorado, and then Indiana University. The typical dissertation is 201 pages long. More than half of the dissertations focused on four specializations: higher education, curriculum and instruction, educational administration, and science education; 35.71% of the dissertations focused on the university level; 92.47% dealt with traditional (old) topics; and 21.43% of the dissertations titles had good writing style and content; 68.62% of the dissertations were descriptive; 23.85% were correlational; 7.53% were causal, while 4.6% only were experimental. The questionnaire was used in 66.49% of the dissertations. The study recommended that doctoral dissertations be analyzed every five years or so to find out the research trends and characteristics in them.

### **1. Introduction**

A doctoral dissertation is considered one of the requirements for obtaining a doctoral degree. It is what distinguishes this advanced stage of graduate studies from other stages. Anyone who is familiar with doctoral dissertations in the field of education will notice a huge number of them in this field. A report issued by the University Microfilm International Center stated that the number of dissertations written in the field of education in the USA between the years 1960-1975 was 63,929 dissertations. This number represents 20% of the total number of dissertations written in all disciplines in the same period. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the number of students who obtained a doctorate degree in education by the end of 1985 was 239 students. This number represents 38.8% of the total number of PhD holders in all fields.

A doctoral dissertation is of great importance in developing graduate students' ability to conduct research and prepare them for practical life. In a study conducted by Slavens (1979) on a sample of 5 professors who held a doctorate in library sciences from the University of Michigan in the United States, 46% of the sample reported that their ability to conduct research was mainly due to the skills they acquired during their the preparation of their doctoral dissertation. 19% indicated that this ability came from their work experience, while 16% indicated that the skills they acquired came through the courses they took at the university. 9% indicated the role of research paper they have written in their courses.

Berelsen (1960), Porter & Wolfe (1975) summarized the importance of a doctoral dissertation as follows:

- Adding something new to knowledge.
- Training the student to conduct independent research of a high quality.
- Gaining experience and knowledge in a specialized area and developing his/her skill in using a specific research methodology and investigating that topic.

Given the importance of doctoral dissertations in various disciplines, they have received a fair share of studies in the literature. For example, Summers (1981) conducted a study of doctoral dissertations on teaching reading methods at the secondary level. Slavens (1979), Newberry (1978) conducted a study on doctoral dissertations in library sciences, Popovich (1978) conducted a study on doctoral dissertations in business administration, Goehlert (1979) conducted a study on doctoral dissertations in political science, and White (1977) conducted a study on Doctoral dissertations in art education, Draper (1974) conducted a study on doctoral dissertations in adult education, Cooper (1978) conducted a study on doctoral dissertations in foreign languages teaching, and Lybeck & Kollerstrom (1979) conducted a study on doctoral dissertations in science teaching methods.

Doctoral dissertations in some specializations have been subjected to evaluation and criticism. It has been found that they do not serve the purposes mentioned previously. Berelsen (1960) wondered whether doctoral dissertations were truly a new classification of knowledge. He attributed this to the pressures students are exposed to, which prompts them to conduct research of little importance. Reid (1978) stated that doctoral dissertations written in the field of biology are an educational method of little benefit and do not provide the student with the skills necessary for conducting specialized research in his field of specialization.

Despite the importance of doctoral dissertations in education, there is no published scientific study that investigates doctoral dissertations prepared by Saudi students in education and reveals the topics they covered in their research and the research methods they used. Therefore, the current study is an attempt to fill this gap in this field, in an attempt to shed light on some aspects of these dissertations, which would be useful for graduate students in the future.

## **2. Aims of Study**

This study aims to describe the doctoral dissertations prepared by Saudi students in education between the years 1969-1985 AD. Specifically, this study aims to provide a demographic description of the dissertations in terms of the number of dissertations written annually, the type of academic degree awarded, the universities that granted the degree, the dissertation length in pages, and gender of authors. It also aims to provide a description of the dissertation content in terms of educational area of specialization, selected topics, courses under study, academic stage/grade level under study, the dissertation title, research problem, research methodology, research instruments, sample, statistical analysis methods, study results, and writing of the abstract.

## **3. Methodology**

In this study, an educational doctoral dissertations is defined as dissertation that is partly or fully related to any educational branch taught at colleges of education and has a direct connection to educational psychology, philosophy of education, educational supervision, guidance and counselling, higher education, secondary education, primary education, and early childhood education, special education, vocational education, adult education, teacher preparation, educational evaluation and measurement, and other educational areas specializations.

In addition, this study depended mainly on the titles and doctoral dissertations abstracts written by Saudi students who graduated from US universities between the years 1969-1985, which are directly related to the educational fields mentioned above. The titles of educational dissertations were obtained from the book of doctoral dissertations accepted in American and Canadian universities about the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The book was issued by the Office of the Saudi Cultural Attaché in Washington in 1987. The abstracts were obtained from the volumes of Dissertation Abstracts International (DAI) issued by the International Microfilm Center by searching in Subject Index in volumes 29-46. Thus, 239 titles and 224 doctoral dissertations abstracts written over the sixteen-year time period under study were found. The author was not able to obtain fifteen abstracts.

The analysis process began by classifying the abstracts according to the year of publication, demographic variables and content variables. The data for each abstract were entered into the computer and were statistically analyzed at the computer unit of the Educational Research Center at King Saud University using the SPSS statistical package.

It should be noted that the process of analyzing the abstracts was not easy because the variables under study were not available in every abstract. Therefore, the results of the current study are based only on abstracts and the information available in them. Analysis of the full dissertations may reveal to different results.

#### **4. Results**

Results of the analysis of the dissertation abstracts revealed that the first doctorate degree in education was awarded in 1969. Table 1 shows the number of holders of a doctorate degree in education in the 1970's compared to the first half of the 1980's. The year 1981 marked the beginning of the boom in the number of Ph.D. holders in education, as the percentage of those holding a doctorate degree in education over a period of sixteen years was the highest.

In addition, results showed that the first woman obtained a doctorate in education from the United States of America in 1973. The number of women who obtained a doctorate degree in education during the sixteen years period was five female students, or 2.01%, compared to 183 students, or 76.6%, of those who obtained a doctor of philosophy degree.

The number of universities in which doctoral educational dissertations were prepared were 53. Table 2 shows the universities in which five or more dissertations were prepared. It shows that more than one third of the dissertation were prepared in three major universities: Michigan State University, the University of Northern Colorado, and Indiana University, with a percentage of 13.4%, 12.7%, and 11.7%, respectively.

In terms of the length, dissertations ranged between 60-845 pages. The average dissertation length is 201 pages, with a standard deviation of 90.3, indicating a clear variance in the length of the dissertations.

Regarding educational subfields, it was found that doctoral dissertations covered 27 educational specialties according to the DIA classification. More than half of the dissertations focused on four main specializations: higher education 14.2%, and curriculum and instruction 10.5% (see Table 3). The least common majors were community colleges, educational social studies, primary education, guidance and counselling, testing and measurement, early childhood, physical education, philosophy of education, agricultural education, and special education. The total number of dissertations written in these specialties together constituted less than 9.4% of the total number of dissertations.

Since higher education was the most common educational specialty, the university stage received the highest percentage of research, as 35.71% of the dissertations were conducted in it, compared to 27.67% that focus on the secondary stage, 11.6). % focusing on junior high school, and 10.71% on primary education, and one study on the pre-school level (see Table 4).

Regarding the course types, 12.5% of the dissertations were conducted on English language teaching, (12.05%) investigated science, including biology, physics, and chemistry, 7.59% were conducted on mathematics, and 4.02 % on social sciences and 4 studies on reading, physical education and agriculture (see Table 5).

As for the educational topics that were of interest to Saudi students, they were classified into twenty categories and are shown in Table 6.

In addition, 12.97% of the dissertations designed a plan; 9.2% focused on attitudes; 17 dissertations explored the factors influencing a phenomenon; and 4 dissertations developed educational materials such as tests and modules; 92.47% dealt with traditional topics, while 7.53% dealt with innovative topics such as the use of satellite in higher education, the use of computers in planning for higher education, modifying the classroom system, individualizing instruction, educational television, and using field trips; In science education, the Natural History Museum, language, physics and mathematics laboratories, etc. It was also found that 21.75% dealt with repeated topics (See Table 7).

Analysis of the dissertation titles revealed that 54.53% contained unnecessary words such as "study of...", "analysis of...", "An analytical study..." and so on; 24.55% did not include the study variables and did not explain or describe the relationship between them accurately; 15.18% did not specify the scope of the study, such as the study sample or the location of the study; and 9.82% needed reformatting and re-organizing (See Table 8).

Given the importance of studying a simple, specific problem that prevents confusion, determines the relationships between variables, and facilitates the process of arriving at results and presenting them clearly, and given the importance of formulating the problem in clear and specific terms that help the researcher know what should be done to ensure the validity of his hypothesis, and help the reader in making value judgments on it, the research problems were analyzed as stated in the abstracts. It was found that the in 31.25% the research problem was either general, not specific, or multi-faceted; 68.62% were descriptive to describe the characteristics of an individual, group, phenomenon, or system. In 23.85% it was correlational, aiming to find out whether the variables under study were related to each other, and whether the variables under study assumed the existence of a relationship between two variables or not (see Table 9). Accordingly, 64.44% of the dissertations relied mainly on the descriptive method; 23.85% were correlational, while 04.6% were experimental (see Table 10).

When classifying the research into levels, 68.62% of the studies were from the first level, which aims to obtain all information about status quo; 23.85% were from the second level, i.e., internal validity research that aims to find out why a certain phenomenon occurred; 3.35% were from the third level, i.e., external validity research that aims to identify the possibility of generalizing the same result to different circumstances; and 4.6% were from the fourth level, i.e., theoretical research that aims to discover the laws that govern a phenomenon (see Table 11).

Regarding the type of sample used in Saudi students' dissertations, the results of the abstracts listed in Table 12 showed that 18.2% used random sampling; 16.36% used a control and an experimental group; 15, 54% a population; 3.1% used a stratified sample; 029.29% studied a specific phenomenon at a particular university or group of schools in a particular city or educational district, despite the presence of the same phenomenon in all Universities and schools in various regions. This would prevent the results from being generalized to the rest of the schools and universities because the sample was not representative of the original population.

Classifying the research instruments used in the dissertations, it was found that the most commonly used research instrument was the questionnaire 66.49%; 18.56% used interviews; 17.68% used observation; 04.64% used attitude scales. Analysis of the abstracts also revealed that 33.5% used more than one instrument, and 24.2% used an inappropriate instrument (see Table 13).

Analysis of the abstracts demonstrated that 16.52% of the dissertation were theoretical, i.e., did not rely on statistical analysis (had quantitative results); whereas 84.2% relied on statistical analysis. The type of

statistical analysis was mentioned in 126 abstracts only, and the vast majority of the studies used more than one statistical analysis method. Table 14 shows that (19.01%) used analysis of variance; 18% used correlation coefficient of various types; 17.18% used descriptive statistics; 14.11% used t-test for differences between means, and (16.56%) used the Chi-square test.

Moreover, the results in (16.96%) of the abstracts were either inconsistent with the problem, known facts, superficial, unclear, insufficient and not comprehensive of the study questions.

Furthermore, (6.25%) of the abstracts did not mention the research problem or its purpose; (50.9%) did not mention the type of sample used, and (5.36%) did not mention the research instrument; (27.2%) did not indicate the method used in the statistical analysis, (5.8%) did not mention the results, and four abstracts had no connection to the topic of the study.

**Table 1**  
**Frequencies and percentages of the number of students earning a doctorate degree in education**

Year	Frequency	%
1970-1966	1	less than 1%
1975-1971	21	8.79%
1980-1976	49	20.5%
1985-1981	168	70.29%

**Table 2**  
**Frequencies and percentages of American universities that approved dissertations**

Name of Institution	Frequency	%
Michigan State University	32	13.4%
University of Northern Colorado	29	12.1%
Indiana University	28	11.7%
University of Kansas	25	6.3%
University of Oklahoma	11	4.6%
University of Oregon	9	4.2%
Colorado University	9	3.8%
University of Pittsburgh	7	2.9%
Oklahoma State University	6	2.5%
University of Wisconsin	83	34.7%

\*43 universities

**Table 3**  
**Frequencies and percentages for educational dissertation specializations**

Area of Specialization	Frequency	%
Higher Education	34	14.2%
Curriculum and Instruction	33	13.8%
educational administration	39	12.1%
Methods of teaching science	35	10.5%
Teaching foreign languages	18	7.5%
Preparing teachers	13	5.4%
Teaching aids	12	5.0%
Educational psychology	10	4.2%
General education	9	3.8%
high school	8	3.3%
Methods of teaching mathematics	8	3.3%

Methods of teaching social subjects	6	2.5%
Vocational education	6	2.5%
Adult Education	6	2.5%
Other specialties*	22	9.2%

\*13 specialties

**Table 4**  
**Frequencies and percentages for the stages of education under study**

Academic Level	Frequency	%
University	80	33.47%
High school	62	25.94%
Middle school	26	10.88%
Primary	24	10.04%
Junior college	13	5.44%
Vocational education	9	3.77%
Adult education	6	2.51%
Private education	3	1.26%
Pre-school	1	Less than 1%

**Table 5**  
**Frequencies and percentages of subjects studied**

Course Type	Frequency	%
English Language	28	1.73%
The Sciences	27	11.3%
Mathematics	17	7.11%
Social Science	9	3.77%
Reading	2	Less than 1%
Agriculture	1	Less than 1%
Physical Education	1	Less than 1%

**Table 6**  
**Frequencies and percentages of research topics**

Topics	Frequency	%
Teacher preparation programs	25	10.5%
education	21	8.8%
Pupils' achievement	23	9.6%
Curricula	20	8.4%
Administration	21	8.8%
Teaching aids	16	6.7%
Workforce development	14	5.8%
Teaching Methods	11	4.6%
the culture	11	4.6%
Follow students	9	3.85%
Educational goals	8	3.3%
Program evaluation	7	2.9%
The emergence and development of a university	6	2.5%
Measurement	6	2.5%
Vocational education	6	2.5%
Guidance	5	2.1%
Teacher evaluation	4	1.7%

Women's education	4	1.7%
Educational Supervision	3	1.3%
Other topics*	19	7.9%

**Table 7**  
**Frequencies of duplicate topics**

<b>Duplicate Topics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
• Factors affecting the use of educational media	6
• Studying abroad and its impact on changing attitudes	5
• The relationship between achievement and the level of mental development as defined by Piaget	5
• University stage goals	4
• Factors influencing college choice	4
• Primary school program evaluation	4
• Reasons for students dropping out	3
• Behavior of the college dean	3
• Administrative behavior of the department head	3
• Evaluation of educational preparation for mathematics teachers	3
• Secondary school goals	2
• Literacy eradication goals	2
• Evaluation of social studies teacher preparation	2
• A proposed plan for evaluating secondary education	2
• Factors that affect the enrollment of Saudi students in teacher training institutes	2

**Table 8**  
**Frequencies and percentages of dissertation title characteristics**

<b>Title characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Well written and content	48	21.43%
Inconsistent with the problem	87	78.83%
It does not mention the variables and the relationship between them	55	24.55%
The scope of the study is not specified	34	15.18%
It needs rearranging	22	9.82%
Contains unnecessary words	102	45.53%

**Table 9**  
**Frequencies and percentages for each of the three types of research problems**

<b>Type of Research Problem</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Descriptive	164	68.62%
Correlational	57	23.85%
Causal	18	7.53%

**Table 10**  
**Research levels**

<b>Research Levels</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
First level (collecting information)	164	68.62%
The second level (internal validity)	57	23.85%
The third level (external validity)	8	3.35%
Fourth level (theoretical research)	11	4.6%

**Table 11**  
**Frequencies and percentages of samples used in dissertations**

Sample Types	Frequency	%
Random	41	37.27%
Experimental-control	18	16.36%
population	16	14.54%
Stratified	7	6.6%
Clusters	3	2.73
Regular	1	اقل من 1
No sample used	24	21.82
Not mentioned	114	-----

**Table 12**  
**Frequencies and percentages of research instruments used in dissertations**

Research Instrument	Frequency	%
Questionnaires	129	66.49%
Interviews	36	18.56%
Tests	29	17.68%
Documents	226	13.68%
Observations	16	8.24%
Attitude scales	9	4.64%
Not used (theoretical study)	19	-----
Not mentioned	12	-----

**Table 13**  
**Frequencies and percentages of statistical analysis methods used in dissertations**

Statistical Analysis Technique	Frequency	%
Analysis Of Variance	31	19.1%
Correlation Coefficient	28	17.18%
Descriptive Statistics	28	17.18%
T-Test	23	14.11%
Chi Square	27	16.56%
Multivariate analysis	10	6.13%
Regression Analysis	13	7.98%
Computer Analysis	8	4.91%
Analysis Of Covariance	6	3.68%
T-Test	2	1.23%
F Test	3	1.84%
Factor Analysis	3	-----
Not Mentioned	61	-----
Not Used	37	22.7%

## 5. Discussion and Recommendations

This study is an attempt to shed light on some aspects of the educational doctoral dissertations of Saudi students who graduated from US universities between the years 1969-1985. It has been noted that the characteristics of these dissertations are very similar to doctoral dissertations and educational research conducted by other graduate students and researchers in the United States.

Abstracts analysis showed that (68.62%) of the dissertation were descriptive and historical research, and action research revolving around an educational problem, and aim to provide information about a direct



educational situation such as human relations, efficiency at work, motivations to work, and performance analysis, developing a plan, developing an educational policy, solving problems, diagnosing problems and then providing solutions, in-service training, new teaching methods, learning styles, evaluation methods, values and attitudes, improving performance, and using instruments such as questionnaires, interviews and observation.

The topics chosen by Saudi students for their dissertations are similar to the list of topics presented by Summer (1981) as models for the topics that graduate students choose for their research. Analysis of the abstracts revealed the paucity of studies that relied on the experimental method (4.6%), the paucity of pure basic research (26.5%), which aims to understand and explain educational and social phenomena and to develop educational theories. This result is not limited to Saudi students' research. In a study by Persell (1976) on a sample of 390 educational articles selected from among 1,100 published educational articles, she found that 43% of the research was below average in terms of adding something new to knowledge (to educational theories). It also found that 59% of this research revolved around an important problem but did not help in understanding it, and that 25% of this research did not examine an important problem.

In a study conducted in 1968 on 200 research papers funded by the National Science Foundation, it was found that the percentage of research that added to educational knowledge was less than 15%.

Since the goal of writing doctoral dissertations is to present educational research of high quality and add something new to educational knowledge, it was necessary for dissertations to be directed towards developing an educational theory that aims at understanding and interpreting educational phenomena, predicting them, and controlling them, by identifying and clarifying the relationships between the phenomena. By changing an independent variable, and controlling the rest of the variables, the effect of this variable on the dependent variable will be observed. Hence the importance of experimental research is in determining the relationships between variables, providing conclusive evidence that relationships exist between the variables, and providing conclusive evidence that there is a cause and effect between them.

The results of the study revealed that 66% of educational doctoral dissertations written by Saudi students relied on the questionnaire as the main research instruments. This is also a phenomenon that is not limited to Saudi students alone. In a study by Haller (1970) on doctoral dissertations in educational administration between the years 1960-1966, he found that 80% of those dissertations used the questionnaire as a research instrument. In another study Kiley (1973) found that 81% of graduate students use questionnaires as a main instrument in their research, and that 58% use questionnaires they prepared and 33% use published questionnaires. In a study by Lazarsfeld & Sieber (1963) on the research used in a third of those studies was the questionnaire.

Although there is no single correct and optimal way for conducting research. Although the choice of a research method and research instrument depends mainly on the type of problem under study, using questionnaires so frequently in research leads to making doctoral dissertations more superficial, and thus makes the knowledge base less solid than it should be. Since educational sciences are complex and overlapping, the research topics that require the use of questionnaires are fewer in number than is the case in reality. Understanding educational phenomena should be based not only on studying the objectives, knowing performance systems and practices, and collecting simple information about a social system, such as the number of students enrolled in the university or the number of books in the library. Knowing whether the study of modern mathematics is positive has led to positive trends. Students have a tendency to study mathematics, and this does not come about through experimentation and controlling variables.

Analysis of the abstracts revealed that the dissertation titles and content were good in (21.43%) of the dissertation, the research problem was general, not specific, and complex in (31.25%), and (24.2%) used a non-specific search instrument and instruments inappropriate to the research problem. In 31.25%, the results of the study were not generalizable to population. In 16.96% the results were general, superficial, insufficient, and inconsistent with the problem. There are also general drawbacks found even in published educational research. Persell (19760) found that 25% of the articles that received a low rating for their improper research methodology had used an improper method of data analysis and 24% of the research studies had used an improper method for collecting information, in addition to other drawbacks such as insufficient analysis, weakness in interpretation, and weakness in the presentation of the results. In a study by Ward, Hall, and Schamm (1975) that evaluated a sample of 121 educational articles published in 44 periodicals, they found that the research design in 27% of the studies was weak; and the research design in 23% of the studies was inappropriate; 22% of studies have evidence of results that support the conclusions they reached. The researchers concluded that if any flaw was found in one aspect of the research, the study was weak in other aspects.

In addition to all of the above, the graduate student should take into account several matters, including the wording and content of the title. The title is the key to the study, because it gives readers an idea about the subject and scope of the study. The title should express the content of the study accurately, concisely, and clearly, and explain the variables under study and the relationship between them, because mentioning the two variables facilitates the process of identifying the subject of the study, without the need to read the abstract. It should clarify the scope of the study, that is, mention the sample members. It should also clarify the scope of the study, that is, mention the sample members, the geographic location, the academic subject, and the academic stage. In terms of wording, the title should be short and concise, important words should be put at the beginning of the title, and words: "study...", "research into...", "analysis" should not be used.

Regarding the research problem, it should be formulated in specific, clear, and concise terms, because this would help the researcher himself know what he is looking for, and what he should do to ensure the validity of his hypothesis. A clear problem also helps the reader of the research in making value judgments about the significance of the research that he needs. The problem should not focus on several variables, because that would lead to confusion in determining the relationships between those variables and would lead to difficulty in arriving at results and presenting them clearly. It is necessary for the research problem to be limited, because a broad general problem gives very general and ambiguous results and indicates that the student did not analyze the problem in sufficient detail. The problem should be based on prior studies, lead to subsequent studies, and contribute to adding something new to knowledge.

If a student wants to replicate a topic that other researchers have studied, he can do so if he believes that it is replicated in different circumstances, with a different research method to provide new information about the variables under study, particularly if the results of the original study are questionable, and if there are ambiguous points that need clarification, and if the results in their new form would have scientific importance.

This study recommends that the research a topic should not have been previously investigated, because in replicating a previously studied topic, the student loses a significant part of the experience that he could gain in discovering, planning, and conducting new research.

To avoid replicating a topic that was previously studied, the student should look at the largest possible number of studies on that topic, because this would increase the student's information and understanding of prior studies related to the topic of research and would add to the facts and information that those studies provide.

Although historical, descriptive, correlational, experimental, causal-comparative research, and quantitative and qualitative research are equally important and serve different purposes, it is preferable for the student to choose a dissertation topic that requires a quantitative analysis. By choosing theoretical, non-quantitative research, the student loses a valuable part of the skills that he would develop. It is acquired in the process of designing the experiment, designing the research instrument, selecting the sample, applying the instrument to the sample, analyzing the data using specific statistical methods, and presenting the quantitative results.

When selecting the sample, the study should not be limited to a specific university or a specific group of schools in a specific city, because this prevents generalizing the results to a larger population of schools and universities. Given that the curricula, programs, and systems in the Kingdom's schools are almost uniform, when studying a particular subject, a representative random sample of students, teachers, principals, or schools should be chosen, thus taking the study outside the limited local scope.

When writing the abstract, the student should give sufficient comprehensive information about the content of the study such as the problem, description of the dependent variable, the independent variable, the study hypotheses, the research methodology, the research instrument, the study sample, methods of statistical analysis, and the results of the study in 350 words.

Given the importance of doctoral dissertations in adding highly specialized information, in presenting results reached by researchers under the supervision of specialized experts, in their wide use of primary information sources, and in identifying experimental investigations and statistical information and despite some drawbacks, doctoral dissertations should be taken advantage of because they are a huge repository of valuable research that needs to be discovered. This necessitates the classification Saudi doctoral dissertations and analyzing their content once every five years to determine the changes and development that have occurred in their topics during their research.

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